

## Over a third of Gen Z would resort to 'DIY' dentistry

Over a third (34%) of 'Gen Z' respondents to a new poll agree they would resort to 'DIY' dentistry measures, including self-tooth extraction, due to a lack of access to dental care. Shockingly, 16–24-year-olds are feeling the most pressure to resort to such extreme measures, compared to just 12% of respondents over the age of 55. Experts are calling for the Government to prioritise putting prevention at the heart of dental care

Just launched, the Wrigley Oral Healthcare Programme's Oral Health Index has revealed that respondents overwhelmingly want the Government to do more to support the dental profession.

Over three quarters (77%) of people surveyed agreed that the Government could do more to promote oral health – with only 4% disagreeing.

Recent NHS dentistry statistics revealed a 9.5% decrease<sup>1</sup> in adults being seen for NHS dental treatment in the 24 months up to June 2022 from the previous year, and a 25% reduction in the 24 months up to June 2019.

The real-life impact of this has been reflected in the Index. Sixty-eight percent of those surveyed agreed that there is a crisis in the provision of dental services, and, over half (54%) agree there is a postcode lottery when it comes to accessing dental services. A recent House of Commons briefing paper on dentistry evidenced this, revealing that dental schools are unevenly distributed across the country and places like the East of England have none.<sup>2</sup>

With the Government's Health and Social Care Committee launching an inquiry into NHS dentistry, it is vital that prevention in oral healthcare is recognised as a priority to support the dental industry and protect the nation's oral health.

The Wrigley Oral Healthcare Programme is proud to work with dental professionals to promote the role of at-home oral health tools that play an important role in preventative oral healthcare. Measures like brushing twice a day and flossing are key, whilst tools like sugarfree gum can play a vital part in protecting people's oral health when they're on the go.

British Dental Association Chair Eddie Crouch said: 'In a civilised society no one with toothache should be reaching for pliers and a bottle of gin. Underfunded and overstretched, COVID has pushed already struggling services to breaking point, leaving millions with no options. This access crisis was made in Westminster. Government has a moral responsibility to consign "DIY dentistry" back to the Victorian era.'

Michael Dodds, Senior Principal Scientist for Oral Health at Mars Wrigley said: 'Our survey has revealed some critical statistics about the lengths people would go to rectify their oral health challenges, even going so far as considering extracting their own teeth. While we know that dentists have done – and continue to do – all they can to support patients through the impact that COVID-19 has had, ongoing challenges like the cost of living mean we need to look for low-cost, impactful ways to protect your oral health. Brushing your teeth twice a day and flossing are important steps, but in addition sugarfree gum is an effective, accessible and inexpensive way to protect your teeth on the go.'

### References

1. Nasseripour M, Newton J T, Warburton F *et al.* A systematic review and meta-analysis of the role of sugar-free chewing gum on plaque quantity in the oral cavity. *Front Oral Health* 2022; doi: 10.3389/froh.2022.845921.
2. Newton J T, Awojobi O, Nasseripour M *et al.* A systematic review and meta-analysis of the role of sugar-free chewing gum in dental caries. *JDR Clin Trans Res* 2020; **5**: 214–223.

## Providing a voice for private dentists

Whether you provide NHS or private dental services, work in a large or small practice, want to move into a new discipline or develop skills in your current field, the British Dental Conference & Dentistry Show (BDCDS) 2023 has something for you. Be sure to get yourself to the Birmingham NEC for 12–13 May to make the most of everything on offer!

For those working in the private dental sector, the British Association of Private Dentistry (BAPD) will be among the esteemed partners for BDCDS 2023. The organisation is on a mission to represent, guide, protect and support dental professionals in the sector, striving to ensure their voice is heard as a key contributor at government and regulator level.

The BAPD will be hosting the BAPD Private Dentist Theatre at BDCDS 2023, offering a varied programme designed specifically for professionals in the private field. Topics will cover emotional intelligence, digital dentistry, mentoring and so much more, explored by an array of leading names in the dental field.

The British Dental Conference & Dentistry Show 2023 will be held on Friday 12 and Saturday 13 May, NEC Birmingham, co-located with DTS. For more information, visit <https://birmingham.dentistryshow.co.uk/>.

## Take on challenging cases

The Axiom X3 implant system from Anthogyr, a Straumann Group brand, enables dental professionals to take on all clinical challenges using the same implant, regardless of the clinical situation.

This implant system responds to the needs and expectations of clinicians for an implant which offers multi-functionality, immediacy, bone preservation, and compatibility.

The Axiom X3 provides dentists with a versatile implant solution, which means more practical indications for clinicians as well as less required stock. The implant system also offers even more flexibility and freedom thanks to a wide choice of diameters and optimal insertion and guidance.

Get in touch with the team at Anthogyr for more information.

For more information about the AxiomX3 from Anthogyr, visit <https://go.nature.com/3LuPAqy>.

